

OHRNET

THE OHR SOMAYACH TORAH MAGAZINE ON THE INTERNET

PARSHA INSIGHTS

EFFECTING CAUSE

“It happened at the end of two years to the day; Pharaoh dreamed...” (41:1)

Cause and effect are frequently mistaken for each other.

When we see someone who has been very successful in business, we assume that the *cause* is his business acumen. The reverse is in fact the truth. Hashem decides how much money this person will have, with the *effect* that he is given the necessary ability and opportunity to acquire the wealth.

Similarly, Pharaoh's dream did not *cause* Yosef's release from prison, but rather Hashem decreed that the time had come for Yosef's release with the *effect* that “Pharaoh dreamed”.

• Beis HaLevi

THE EXQUISITE BALANCE

“And they called out before him ‘Avreich’” (41:43)

What is peace? Peace is the uniting of opposites. “He who makes peace in His High Places.” In “His High Places” there is an angel of fire and an angel of water. Opposites. Water extinguishes fire. However Hashem makes peace between fire and water and unites them in unity.

That quality, that quantity of uniting opposites is the quality of Yosef Hatzadik. For Yosef unites the two opposites — Kindness and Judgment.

Yosef personifies ‘bringing close with the right hand’ — the hand of Kindness, and ‘pushing away with the left’ — the hand of Judgment. The exquisite balance. On the one hand, there is Yosef who dominates and rules in judgment. On the other, there is Yosef who feeds the world. That quality of peace is implicit in his name “Avreich.” A father — ‘Av’ — in wisdom, and soft — ‘rach’ — in youthful years.

Two world views — the expansive and the constrictive. The expansive view is the view of Kindness. Kindness by its

nature wants to expand, to increase, to give, to broaden, to spread out. That's the quality of ‘Av’ — the father, of the wisdom of years.

On the other hand ‘rach’ — ‘soft in years’ — the aspect of constriction, of limited vision, the mark of youth and impetuosity which doesn't see past tomorrow. “We want the world and we want it now!” Judgment which brooks no contradiction.

Kindness and Judgment. Fire and Water. Yosef Hatzadik. The essence of Peace.

• Adapted from Rabbi R.D.S. in *Iturei Torah*

**“Kindness and Judgment.
Fire and Water.
Yosef Hatzadik.
The essence of Peace.”**

WINDOW SERENADE

“Since G-d has made all this known to you [Yosef], there is none more discerning nor wise than you.” (41:39)

Once, there were two rich men who lived next door to each other. A dispute arose between them. They each claimed that a certain harp player had come to play outside his window and in his honor.

In view of their wealth, and the seriousness with which they both took themselves, they brought their case before the great rabbi, the Noda B'Yehuda. They both apportioned a large sum to be given to the rabbi for judging the case.

The rabbi said to them: “It is clear to me that the harp player came to play in the honor of *neither* of you; rather it was in my honor he came, seeing as I am receiving such a large sum for judging this case!”

Thus it was with Pharaoh. When

Pharaoh heard Yosef telling him that he should appoint a wise and discerning man, he remarked that his dream had not been, as he had thought, in his honor; neither was it so that they would not be devastated by famine, as the Egyptians had thought. The purpose of Pharaoh's dream was none other than that Yosef be raised to the pinnacle of power, and “since G-d had made all this known to you, there is none more discerning nor wise than you...”

• *Shaar Bas Rabim in Iturei Torah*

WATCH YOUR STEP!

“And Pharaoh said to Yosef, ‘Behold — I have placed you over all Egypt.’” (41:41)

The Sforno explains that Pharaoh was cautioning Yosef, as if to say “See and consider well. Make sure that you conduct affairs so that they reach their proper conclusion. For I have placed a great matter in your hands.”

Why was it necessary for Pharaoh to caution Yosef in this manner? Pharaoh had already recognized that Yosef was a man of G-d, unparalleled in wisdom and perception. Surely, such a person can be relied upon to do everything necessary to avoid disaster and rescue the world from hunger.

And yet, Pharaoh *did* caution him. It must be then, that even Yosef, a man of G-d, and aware that even the slightest error may bring disaster — even such a man must check his every action to avoid a false move.

Man is crafted from lowly elements. He is hewn from the stuff of physicality. However great his intellect, he is a creature with but a small mind and a limited vision.

Therefore, if he does not constantly analyze his path with constant watchfulness, it is very possible that, although he knows that the future of the world rests on his shoulders, he may slacken in his efforts and fall prey to disaster.

• Adapted from *Chidushei HaLev*

PARSHA OVERVIEW

It is two years later. Pharaoh has two ominous and enigmatic dreams. He is not satisfied with any of the interpretations that are offered to explain them. Pharaoh's wine chamberlain belatedly remembers that Yosef accurately interpreted his dream while they were imprisoned together, and Yosef is immediately released. Yosef interprets that within a short time there will be seven years of unusual abundance, followed by seven years of extraordinarily severe famine. Yosef suggests to Pharaoh that he appoint a wise and discerning man to harness the years of plenty in preparation for the years of famine. Pharaoh, recognizing the spirit of G-d in Yosef, appoints him as viceroy to oversee the entire project. Pharaoh gives Yosef an Egyptian name, Tsofnas Panayach, and selects Osnas, Yosef's ex-master's daughter, as Yosef's wife. As a result of Yosef's plan, Egypt becomes the granary of the world during the famine. Yosef has two sons, Menashe and Ephraim. Yaakov, hearing that there is food in Egypt, sends his sons to buy provisions. In Egypt, the brothers come before Yosef and bow down before him, fulfilling his prophecy. Yosef recognizes them immediately, but they do not recognize him in his new incarnation as viceroy of Egypt. Mindful of his prophetic dreams,

Yosef plays the part of an Egyptian overlord and acts towards them harshly, accusing them of being foreign spies. After interrogating them, Yosef sells them food, but keeps Shimon hostage until they bring their youngest brother Binyamin to him as a proof of their honesty. Yosef commands his servants to place the purchase-money on top of the food in each of their sacks. On the return journey, when feeding their donkeys, they discover the money and their hearts sink. They return to their father Yaakov and retell everything that has happened. At first Yaakov refuses to let Binyamin go down to Egypt, but when the famine grows unbearably harsh, he accedes. Yehuda guarantees Binyamin's safety, and the brothers including Binyamin return to Egypt. After inquiring about his father's welfare, Yosef welcomes the brothers lavishly as honored guests. However, when he sees Binyamin he can barely control his emotions and rushes from the room and weeps. Yosef secretly instructs his servants to again replace the money in the sacks, and in addition, to put his goblet inside Binyamin's sack. When the goblet is discovered, Yosef demands that Binyamin become his slave as a punishment. Yehuda, remembering his promise to his father, interposes and offers himself instead, but Yosef refuses.

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SING My SOUL INSIGHTS INTO THE SHABBOS ZEMIRO

SHALOM ALEICHEM "WELCOME..."

"Peace unto you *ministering angels*
Come in peace you *angels of peace*"

The switch from greeting our heavenly guests as "ministering angels" to "angels of peace" can be understood against the background of the Sabbath Eve scene described in the Talmud (Shabbos 119b): "Two angels accompany a man from the synagogue to his home on Sabbath Eve, one good and one evil. If he enters his home and finds

the candles lit, the table set and everything arranged in honor of the Sabbath, the good angel blesses him that he should succeed in the same fashion the next Sabbath as well, and the evil angel is compelled to concur with this blessing by saying "Amen". The two ministering angels may have opposing missions when they enter the home, but once they see how beautifully the Sabbath is welcomed they bless the host as "angels of peace" harmoniously working together.

לע"נ

ר' נתן בן ר' יעקב ז"ל

נלב"ע ט"ו כסלו

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

PARSHA Q&A ?

1. How many different dreams did Pharaoh have? (Warning: Trick question!)
2. How did some of Pharaoh's advisors misinterpret his dream?
3. How did Pharaoh's recollection of his dream differ from Nevuchadnetzar's recollection of his dream?
4. What was significant about the fact that Pharaoh dreamed repeatedly?
5. What is the significance of the king giving someone his ring?
6. Pharaoh gave Yosef the name 'Tsofnas Panayach.' What did that name mean?
7. Whom did Yosef marry?
8. What happened to the Egyptians' grain that was stored in anticipation of the famine?
9. What did Yosef require the Egyptians to do before he would sell them grain?
10. What prophetic significance lay in Yaakov's choice of the word 'redu' 'descend' (and not 'lechu' 'go'), when telling his sons to go to Egypt?
11. Under what pretext did Yosef accuse his brothers of being spies?
12. Why did the brothers enter the city through different gates?
13. What language did the brothers use when speaking to Yosef?
14. Why did Yosef place Shimon in prison?
15. Which of the brothers found money in his sack first?
16. How did Reuven try to persuade Yaakov to send Binyamin to Egypt?
17. When did Yehuda approach Yaakov about bringing Binyamin to Egypt?
18. How much more money did the brothers bring on their second journey than they brought on the first journey? Why?
19. For whom did Binyamin name his ten children?
20. When the brothers were accused of stealing Yosef's silver goblet, they refuted the claim with the logical principle known as *Kal V'chomer*. What did they say?

BONUS QUESTION?

"And the bad-looking, thin-fleshed cows ate the **seven** beautiful, healthy cows..." (41:4) "And the thin stalks swallowed the **seven** healthy, full stalks..." (41:7) Why, when recounting Pharaoh's dream, does the Torah use the number '**seven**' to describe the good cows, but omits it when referring to the bad cows? And the same question can be asked about the stalks?

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

As viceroy of Egypt, Yosef made three decrees:

1. That no one export more than one donkey laden with food at any one time.
2. That no one send a servant to buy food for his household; rather, the head of the household must be the one to buy the food.
3. That everyone entering Egypt write his name and his father's name in a ledger. Every day, these ledgers were brought to Yosef. Thus Yosef ensured that his brothers themselves would all come to Egypt and that he would be immediately aware of their arrival.

• *Midrash Tanchuma*

HAFTORAH: MELACHIM I 3:15- 4:1

The reading of this week's *Haftorah* is a rare event in the Jewish Calendar.

The reason: *Parshas Miketz* is nearly always read during Chanukah, and a special *Haftorah* for Chanukah is read.

For *Parshas Miketz* to fall after Chanukah, three events have to coincide: Rosh Hashana must fall on a Shabbos, and both the months of *Cheshvan* and *Kislev* must be 'chasser' (deficient), having only 29 days instead of 30.

Interestingly, it makes no difference whether the year itself is a regular year of 12 months or a leap year of 13 months. There is also no difference between *Eretz Yisrael* and the rest of the world in regard to this occurrence.

The *Haftorah* itself describes the famous incident where King Solomon discerns the true mother of a baby claimed by two mothers. How ironic that one of the most famous incidents in the Prophets should be the least read of all the *Haftorahs*!

ON THE CUTTING EDGE

The king said "This one claims: 'This is my son who is alive, and your son is the dead one', and this one claims: 'It is not so! Your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.'"
... **"Cut the living child in two and give half to one and half to the other."** (3:23-25)

It is usually assumed that King Solomon ordered the baby to be cut in half in order to determine the real mother.

In reality, it was already clear to the king who was the true mother from the way the two women had expressed themselves:

The first one started by saying "This is my son who is alive" and only then "and your son is dead;" whereas the second mother commenced her claim by saying "Your son is the dead one" and only afterwards said that "my son is the living one."

The second woman, who was lying, wasn't really interested in getting the living child, for why should she want to expend the considerable effort of raising a child which wasn't really hers. Rather, out of jealousy alone, she wanted to prevent the other woman from keeping the living child.

For that reason her focus was on "Your child is dead," rather than "My son is the living one," since her whole point was to prove the dead child belonged to someone else.

On the other hand, the real mother was only concerned to prove that her child was alive.

From these tell-tale subconscious hints, King Solomon was able to discern the true mother. It was only to prove to the world that his analysis was accurate that he went through the theatrics of calling for the sword to divide the living child, knowing that the real mother would far prefer that the child should live, even if it meant having to give him up.

However Solomon, the wisest of men, had already arrived at the truth of the matter as soon as the two women had opened their mouths.

• *Kochav M'Yaakov in Mayana shel Torah*

WEEKLY DAF

CHULLIN 110 - 116

WHICH MEAT (AND MILK) CAN YOU EAT?

The Torah tells us three times that we must not cook the kid in its mother's milk, in order to convey to us that it is forbidden to cook meat and milk together and to eat or in any way benefit from the product of such cooking.

But what comes under the title of meat?

It cannot be limited to goat meat, because we find in a couple of places that when the Torah wishes to limit the word "kid" to goats, it explicitly writes "the kid of goats." We therefore conclude that the meat referred to in the ban on meat and milk includes all kosher domesticated animals.

But what about undomesticated kosher animals and fowl?

Three opinions are cited in the Talmud:

- **THE MAJORITY VIEW** The meat of undomesticated animals and fowls is forbidden by Torah law to be cooked in milk. The Torah's juxtaposition of the ban on meat and milk with the ban on eating animal life which died of itself (*neveilah*) establishes the rule that any type of meat which is forbidden for lack of *shechita* is forbidden to be cooked with meat.

- **RABBI AKIVA**

The Torah limited its ban to the meat of a domesticated animal, but the Sages prohibited cooking

even the meat of undomesticated animal and fowl with milk.

- **RABBI YOSSI HAGLILI**

The Torah limited the ban to such animals where mother's milk exists. This includes both domesticated and undomesticated animals but excludes fowl. His opinion is that there was not even a rabbinic decree forbidding the cooking of fowl meat and milk.

The *Shulchan Aruch* (*Yoreh De'ah* 87:3) rules like Rabbi Akiva, and limits the rabbinic decree to eating the meat of an undomesticated animal or fowl which has been cooked with milk, but not to cooking or benefiting from it. Other authorities, however, do not make this distinction between the different kinds of meats.

• *Chullin 113a*

A TALE OF TWO BIRDS

There is no explicit passage in the Torah forbidding the eating of meat cooked with milk, and a number of approaches are suggested by various Sages as to the source for prohibiting not only the cooking but the eating and enjoying as well. One of these is Rabbi Ashi's approach, based on the Torah's prohibition (*Devarim* 14:3) "You shall not eat any abominable thing." This encompasses any food rendered abominable by a Torah prohibition attached to it, and therefore includes meat and milk which have been cooked together against the will of the Torah.

This sweeping rule is challenged based on the mitzva of sending away the mother bird before taking its eggs or chicks. If someone violated this prohibition and took the mother bird, he is required to send it away. Why don't we prohibit the eating of this mother bird by whoever eventually captures her, since she comes under the heading of "an abominable thing" once a sin has been committed in connection with her?

The response to this challenge is that if the Torah commanded us to send away the mother bird, it is tantamount to explicitly stating that this bird may be eaten, since it is inconceivable that the Torah would have dictated the letting loose of a bird which will be an obstacle for those who capture it and are unaware of its identity.

This same logic is employed by the Talmud (*Kiddushin* 57a) in regard to the two birds used in the purification of the *metzora*. One is slaughtered and the other sent away. Even if we can identify the latter it is permissible for eating, because it is inconceivable that the Torah would have ordered us to let loose an obstacle. The only difference is that the Talmud there cites a Torah passage hinting at the *kashrus* of the bird sent free. *Tosefos* here point out that this was necessary, because the Torah speaks of both birds together, and we would have assumed without this passage that just as the slaughtered bird is forbidden to be eaten, so too would be the case with the one sent free if we can identify it.

• *Chullin 115a*

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WORLD WIDE WABBIT SEASON

<ABubbe@aol.com> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
A friend told me they were amazed to learn that there is a Jewish law against hunting. I could not explain this to them properly. Is there a law? Where is it? I realize the Kashruth implications, but what are the other implications and sources for this? Thank you. I will pass your answer on to him as well as gain knowledge myself.

Dear ABubbe@aol.com,

Jews have never been known to be hunters. Here are several reasons why.

The Torah commands us to alleviate pain from a suffering animal. This is derived from the verse "If you see your enemy's donkey buckling under its load — and you're tempted not to help him — you must help him unload it." From here we see the commandment to help a suffering animal.

All the more so is it forbidden to actively inflict pain. The Torah wants us to act with mercy, not cultivate cruelty as a character trait.

Besides the pain, killing animals purely for sport is an act of wasteful destruction. Such an act is forbidden by the verse "Do not destroy."

In context, the verse says "When you besiege a city many days to make war upon it, **do not destroy** its trees..." Even in times of war and bloodshed, when one's lower instincts are likely to emerge, the Torah commands us to keep a higher standard of behavior, not to destroy for destruction's sake.

Hunting can be dangerous. Every year, people die in hunting accidents. I even read about someone who shot a huge elk on a cliff above him, and the elk fell on him!

Two people in the Torah are described as 'hunters': Nimrod and Esau. Although they started with ani-

mals, their obsession for hunting led ultimately to a career of 'head-hunting.' They became notorious for their deceit and cruelty towards humans.

We — the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob — should not follow the ways of these people who lacked mercy towards humans and animals. We should emulate the ways of our righteous fathers and mothers who strove to fill their lives with noble character traits.

Sources:

- Exodus 23:5
- Rema, Shulchan Aruch Choshen Mishpat 272:9
- Aruch Hashulchan 272:2
- Deutoronomy, 20:19
- Sefer HaChinuch Deut. 20:19
- Responsa Noda B'Yehudah, Tinyana, Yoreh Deah #10

A-FISHING WE WON'T GO

Morris Olitsky

<MrStats@aol.com wrote>:

May I assume that fishing for sport is prohibited but that fishing for food is acceptable? Shalom

Dear Morris Olitsky,

You're right. Only fishing for food is permitted according to Halacha.

While it's considered 'sportsman-like' to put the fish back in the water, the Torah outlook is exactly the opposite. Do the fish a 'flavor': Eat it for Shabbat!

THE NAME OF THE GAME

Jon Subar

<JONSUBAR@aol.com> wrote:

Isaac sent Esau out to catch 'some game' before planning to give him his blessing. What is 'game'? Doesn't sound very kosher to me because it wasn't ritually slaughtered. Didn't the Patriarchs keep kosher even though it was before Sinai, before the Torah was given? By the way: At work we tried to get

a windshield put in a truck Friday. The biggest glass company in Grand Rapids, Michigan — who always does that for us — couldn't do it for us on Friday. Half of their service technicians had the day off...opening day of deer season of course!

Dear Jon,

Did you say 'deer' Jon? I ask you this because the Midrash says that Esau ran and caught deer for his father.

The Hebrew word 'hunt' — 'tsad' — also means 'trap.' Hence, Esau may have trapped the animals with a net, snare, or even his bare hands. After all, his brother Yaakov was so strong he was able to lift a giant stone from the well, a stone requiring many men to budge.

Why then did Yitzchak tell Esau, "sharpen your weapons, your sword and your bow?" The sword was in order to ritually slaughter the animal. The bow was to protect himself from wild animals, or in order to disable the animal — but in a way that would **not** render it unkosher.

The Talmud says that one of the Sages was able to ritually slaughter a bird in flight with a sharp arrow. Perhaps Esau, renowned for his hunting prowess, was equally skillful. (According to Japanese sources a martial-arts expert in archery would be able to do this as well.)

Sources:

- Midrash Tanchuma, Toldot 11
- Genesis 27:3, Rashi and Siftei Chachamim
- Tractate Chullin 30b

Acquittal Riddle

You are one of the judges in a Jewish court in a capital case. It is your turn to state your opinion. If you say, "I find the defendant innocent," then the defendant receives the death penalty. But if you say, "I find the defendant guilty," he goes 'scot-free.' What is the case?

Answer next week...

PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to this Week's Questions!

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary unless otherwise stated.

1. 41:25 - One. Yosef told Pharaoh that his dream was a single, repeated dream.
2. 41:10 - They said "Seven daughters you will bear, seven daughters you will bury."
3. 41:8 - Pharaoh remembered the *contents* of his dream but didn't know its meaning. Nevuchadnetzar forgot even the *contents* of his dream.
4. 41:32 - It showed that the seven good years would start *immediately*.
5. 41:42 - It shows that he is second in rank to the king.
6. 41:45 - He who explains things that are hidden and obscure.
7. 41:45 - Osnat, the daughter of Potiphar.
8. 41:55 - It rotted.
9. 41:55 - Become circumcised.
10. 42:2 - It hinted to the 210 years that the Jewish people would be in Egypt: The word '*redu*' has the numerical value of 210.
11. 42:12 - They entered the city through ten different gates rather than through one gate.
12. 42:13 - To search for Yosef throughout the city.
13. 42:23 - Hebrew.
14. 42:24 - To separate him from Levi, because together they posed a danger to him.
15. 42:27 - Levi.
16. 42:38 - Reuven said: "You can kill my two sons if I fail to bring Binyamin back to you."
17. 43:2 - When the grain they had purchased in Egypt was finished.
18. 43:12 - Triple. This was in order to repay the money they found in their sacks. The rest of the money was to buy more food, in case the price had doubled.
19. 43:30 - For Yosef.
20. 43:8 - They said "Look, the money we found in our sacks we returned; therefore, how can it be that we would actually steal from you!"

BONUS ANSWER!

Although destined for seven years, the famine ended when Yaakov came to Egypt and blessed Pharaoh (Rashi 47:7,19). Hence, the Torah omits the word **seven** in reference to the bad cows and the bad stalks. This hints that the bad years would be no more than two. Nevertheless, those two years would be severe enough to 'swallow up' any trace of the **seven** good years.

• Ha'amek Davar

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

41:2-4	RAMBAN Pharaoh's Dream	42:21	The Guilt of a Hard Heart	41:8	SFORNO The Magicians' Failure
41:33	Strategy of Dream Interpretation	44:10	Collective Guilt	43:2	Yaakov's Suspicion
42:8	The Riddle of Recognition			43:16	Binyamin's Gifts
42:9	Fulfilling the Dreams			44:16	Admission of Guilt

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